



M E D I A R E L E A S E

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF DHS CLIENTS COULD QUALIFY FOR TAX REFUNDS

CLIENTS URGED TO SEEK FREE TAX PREPARATION

Nashville, Tenn.--It's tax season again and every day thousands of Tennesseans are needlessly spending money on commercial tax preparation sites when they could be getting their taxes done for free! By visiting a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site, individuals and families can get the free help they need.

The Tennessee Department of Human Services is joining forces with the United Way's 2-1-1 community services information line and the IRS to direct low-income clients to their nearest VITA site location. Many low-income individuals and DHS clients will learn that they qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

The EITC has become an increasingly significant part of the U.S. tax code since it was launched in the mid-1970s. Many DHS clients enrolled in the Food Stamp program and in Families First, the state's welfare-to-work program, will qualify for the EITC. It is a refundable federal income tax credit that provides substantial benefits to thousands of qualified filers each year, depending on family size and income.

"The Department realizes our clients are working diligently to become self-sufficient," said Commissioner Virginia T. Lodge. "We want to reinforce our clients' efforts by raising awareness about the EITC, which allows low-income families to receive a refund from their federal income taxes. The EITC is a powerful tool designed to help the working poor."

Thousands of Food Stamps and/or Families First clients may qualify for the EITC including more than 39,500 participants in Shelby County, and 21,200 in Davidson County. More than 149,600 clients may qualify in all other counties across Tennessee.

Qualifications:

- \$36,348 (\$38,348 if married filing jointly) with more than one qualifying child
- \$32,001 (\$34,001 if married filing jointly) with one qualifying child
- \$12,120 (\$14,120 if married filing jointly) with no qualifying child

For more information and locations for VITA sites near you, contact the DHS service center at 1-866-311-4287 or use the 2-1-1 information line.

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